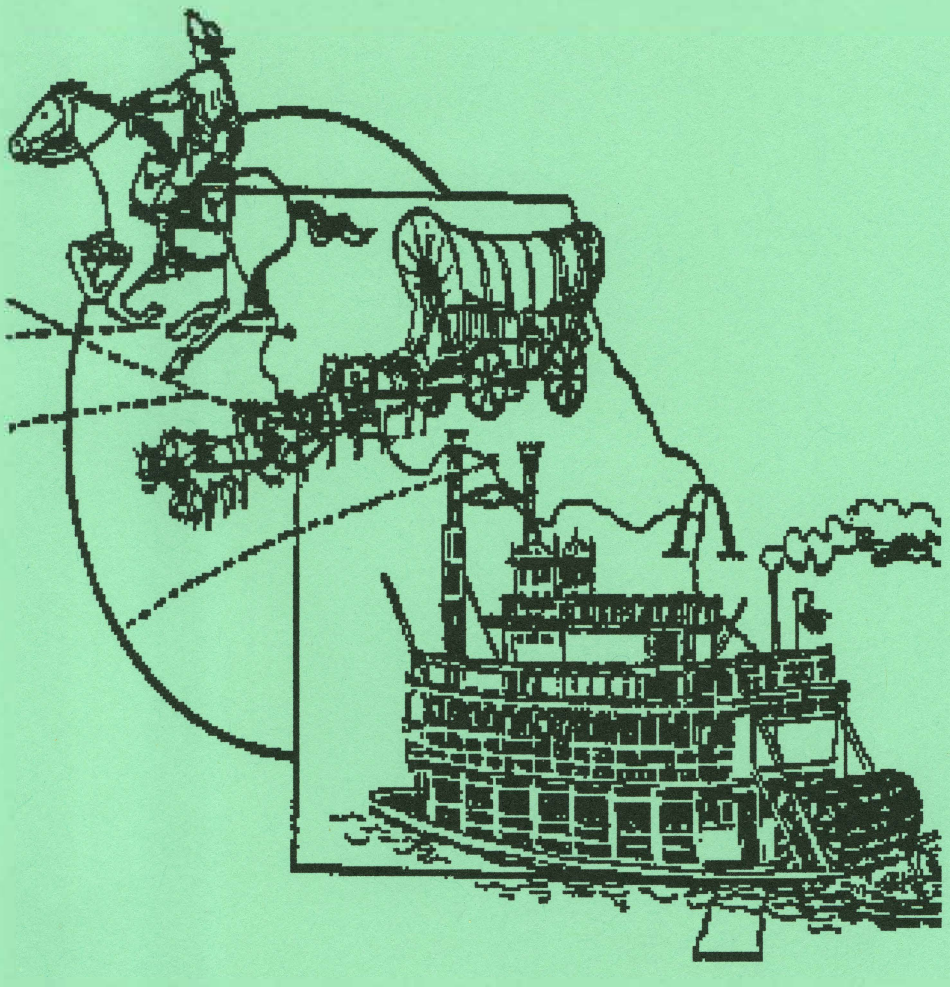

Toward The Setting Sun

2nd Series, Vol. 11, No.1 Fall 2012

TOWARD THE SETTING SUN

The Historical Journal of the Missouri Conference

The United Methodist Church

Second Series

Volume 11 No. 1 Fall 2012

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FROM THE EDITOR...

We begin another new year of *Toward the Setting Sun* with this issue. Missouri United Methodism and its predecessor denominations have a long and honored history which we continue to celebrate in these pages. Currently, we are all caught up in the Sesquicentennial of the War Between the States. Rightly so, since that war was one of the defining moments in our national history. As part of the observance, the Historical Society of the Conference has put special plaques on the graves of Southern Methodist preachers who were martyred simply because they were a part of the South church. We welcome all suggestions for other ways in which we might celebrate the Missouri church during that period.

This year of 2012 is the bicentennial of the War of 1812. We will not be observing it because the war did not really touch Missouri and there was not much of a Methodist Conference in the state. Missouri did not become a conference until 1816, and in 1812 there were only five circuits in Missouri. But we note the passing of the Bicentennial.

John Wright and Arnold Parks have completed their pictorial history of African-American Methodist churches in Missouri. We look forward to reviewing it in these pages.

In this issue, John M. Robinson has written a lengthy study of the Belgrade United Methodist churches and others in close proximity to it. This is the kind of study we wish churches in every county would do, at least for their own use. Mr. Robinson is President of the Bellevue Valley Historical Society. We welcome his work. John Finley is a Reference Librarian at Central Methodist University and the Conference Archivist.

If you have the urge to write for this journal, I have a "wish list." You can contact me at jogooch@aol.com for ideas or to tell me what you'd like to write about.

John O. Gooch, Editor

THE METHODIST HERITAGE.....OUR STORY...

THE BELGRADE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH AND SURROUNDING COMMUNITY CHAPELS

JOHN MCCLURE ROBINSON, III

INTRODUCTION:

In celebration of the 165th anniversary of the Belgrade United Methodist Church, I have briefly chronicled the formation of the Methodist Church, the early Missouri Methodist movement, and specifically traced the Belgrade churches; YES, at one time there were two Methodist Churches in the Belgrade community. The oldest was the Belgrade Methodist Episcopal, South, which opened in 1845. The Belgrade Methodist Episcopal Church (North) opened in 1847. The two churches merged in 1939. From then until 1968, the church was the Belgrade Methodist Church. In 1968 the Methodists and the Evangelical United Brethren churches united and became The United Methodist Church. Belgrade's name changed too, and it continues to serve the local community as the Belgrade United Methodist Church.

It's interesting that over time, circumstances, and re-unification, the mission of the original churches has stayed true to the tenets established by brothers Charles and John Wesley some 275 years ago.

The heritage of Methodism is rich and it shows that Methodists are people who primarily love God. First of all consider the name: people called the earlier followers of John and Charles *"Methodists"* because they were very methodical about their study of the Bible and prayers. John Wesley would get up at 4a.m. to study the Bible, stop for an hour for prayer and go back to study. This devotion to scripture can be seen in the early directions whereby early preachers were instructed to read two whole chapters from the Bible on Sunday. Early Methodists worshiped three times every Sunday; morning, afternoon, and evening. The early worship was lively and active, by the early 1800s the services began to take a more solemn order; by late 1880s Methodists had started using responsive readings and creeds in the services. The most important part of worship was not the way people worshipped, but that their hearts were right with God. Most Methodists identify with the concepts of free-will and God's prevenient grace.

John Wesley (1703-1791) and his brother Charles (1707-1788) were Church of England missionaries to the colony of Georgia, arriving in America in March 1736; it was their only occasion to visit America. Their mission trip was far from successful and both returned to England discouraged. Both brothers, who formed "Holy Clubs" among fellow students at Oxford, had transforming religious experiences in May 1738 and this led the brothers to create a lively renewal of faith movement within the Church of England. As the Methodist movement grew, it became apparent that the ministry would spread to the American colonies.

The first Methodists in America were lay persons, among them an immigrant farmer Robert Strawbridge (Maryland,1760). In 1769, John Wesley sent two of his lay preachers Richard Wright and Francis Asbury. Francis Asbury became the most important figure in early American Methodism for his energetic devotion to the Wesleyan theology, ministry, and organization.

The first conference meeting of Methodist preachers in the colonies was held in Philadelphia in 1773, with ten attending. This group established many of the rituals and important sacraments that are still used today. With independence from England, John Wesley sent ordained pastor Rev. Thomas Coke to America to superintend the work of the *"new"* America. In 1784, the famous Christmas Conference of preachers was held in Baltimore, which charted the future course of the movement in America for years to come. This conference established the Methodist Episcopal Church of America, established one of the oldest publishing houses in United States (the Methodist Book Concern), and adopted a quadrennial General Conference. The year1808 saw the drafting of the first Church Constitution.

Historical Tracing Of Methodism In Missouri

Under colonial rule by Spain and France, only Roman Catholics were allowed to own land and practice their faith in what is now Missouri. These rules were relaxed in 1795 and disappeared when the area became United States territory through the Louisiana Purchase in 1804. In the summer of 1798 John Clark, a Lay Preacher, rowed across the Mississippi River and delivered the first Methodist sermon preached in Missouri, at a spot near Herculaneum. Since the Spanish (Roman Catholic) government of the Louisiana Territory forbade Protestantism in the land they governed, Clark

preached from his rowboat. By 1806 two circuits had been organized to serve 106 Methodists living in the Territory of Missouri. They began the *"Missourie"* and *"Meramack"* circuits. Around 1807 and 1808 early Methodist classes were formed at Lewis Chapel (Eastern Missouri), Caledonia, and Potosi (Southeast Missouri), three of the oldest continuous congregations in Missouri. Old McKendree Chapel was established after the Missouri Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in September 1819. The chapel was named to honor Bishop William McKendree, the first Bishop from the "Western Area". Old McKendree Chapel is the oldest existing Methodist Church west of the Mississippi and is the only historical site of the United Methodist Church in Missouri. When statehood was granted in 1821, Missouri had a population of 66,000 of which 1,543 were Methodist.

The first itinerant Methodist Preacher in Missouri was Rev. John Travis, born November 3, 1773. In 1806 at the age of thirty-three, he was received on trial by the Western Methodist Conference and was sent to the" Missourie" Circuit. His circuit included what are now St. Charles, St. Louis, Franklin, Washington, Jefferson, Ste. Genevieve, and Ste. Francois counties. He was joined in 1807 by Rev. John Clark. After traveling eight long years on the Circuit, John Travis married and settled near Livingston, Kentucky became a doctor and passed away on November 11, 1852.

Missouri Conference records show that the 1829 Methodist Conference was held in Potosi and that all attending dismissed for a day to the Shiloh Meeting House (Caledonia) for a service.

The Second Great Awakening was the dominant religious development among Protestants in America in the first half of the nineteenth century. Through revivals and camp meetings sinners were brought to an experience of conversion. Circuit riding preachers and lay pastors were urged to follow the strict guidelines of the Methodist *Book of Discipline*; members were to " avoid evil, to do good, and to use the means of grace supplied by God". Membership was serious business; there was no place for those whom Wesley called the "almost Christians".

These early years also marked the spread of the Sunday school movement. By 1835 Sunday schools were encouraged in every place where they could be started and

maintained. The church's interest in education was also evident in their establishment of secondary schools and some early colleges.

The Methodist churches also increased their commitments to missionary work. By 1841, there were numerous missionary societies. Mainly women formed these missionary societies that educated, recruited, and raise funds for their specific endeavors.

This time of much progress and growth also brought tensions over the issue of slavery in the United States and ultimately split Methodism into separate churches. The issue of slavery was generally put aside until the 1844 General Conference when both sides had a tense debate which led to the drafting of a Plan of Separation, which permitted the annual conferences in slaveholding states to separate from the Methodist Episcopal Church in order to organize their own ecclesiastical structure; this led to the formation of The Methodist Episcopal Church, South in 1845.

The Civil War was a harsh blow to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; its membership dropped and in many communities the two separate Methodist church groups started appearing. Belgrade was not unscathed by these national issues. The Washington County Recorder of Deeds records show land deeds for the establishment of the Methodist Episcopal Church, (known as North) and Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The Methodist Episcopal, South built a white framed structure near the entrance to the town (present site of Temple Baptist Church) and the Methodist Episcopal Church (MEC) built west of town (former Belgrade Blacksmith shop and later Austin Store; the building was later torn down).

BELGRADE'S OWN CIRCUIT RIDERS

Rev. Alexander M. Robinson was born on December 10, 1848 at Big River, Concord Township, Washington County, five miles north of Caledonia and ten miles south of Potosi. He attended pioneer schools and at a very early age attended regular "class meetings" (as church was called). His father, John Robinson (1800-1864), who was born in Dublin, Ireland and came to America at the age of 12 years, had been a "class leader" for many years. The class leader's role was to see each member of the class at least once quarterly to see how everyone was getting along spiritually. Class meetings

were usually held once a month, but prayer meetings were held in the homes of members during weekday nights. His father was married three times and had eighteen children. Alex's mother was wife number two, the first wife as well as Alex's died young. His mother was a McMurtery and his step-mother was Mary Jamima (Jamison) Hornsey- Robinson. Most of his siblings and parents are buried in the Caledonia Methodist cemetery or in the state of Texas. At 18 years of age Alexander received his Exhorter's license and was appointed Sunday school superintendent of the Rock Springs Methodist Church (Located near Hwy 21 & Wallen Creek). At age 21 he was accepted into the Methodist Episcopal, South Conference at Centenary Methodist Church in St. Louis on October 11, 1871. Bishop Marvin was the presiding bishop of the conference and made an eloquent speech in Robinson's favor. His first circuit was Ellington, MO (known as Barnesville). He had over twenty-two preaching assignments in his career. On November 5, 1872 he married Josephine Eleanor Sloan and they were married over sixty-three years before her death, which was four months before his. She died February 1935 and Alexander passed on May 27, 1935 at his home in Irondale, MO. He was the author of three books, namely: *"Heaven & The Lion"*, *"The Tribe of Judah"*, and his autobiography. He arrived back in the Caledonia charge in 1895 and was assigned to the Belgrade MEC, South; he resided at his late father's farm near Hazel Glen (Washington County). Rev. Robinson stayed in Belgrade until the turn of the century and left the Caledonia Charge in 1900. He returned for the quarterly conference meeting. The last conference records show Rev. A.M. Robinson elected Secretary for the quarterly meeting held in Hazel Glen on September 2, 1916.

Note: *Rev. Alexander M. Robinson performed the marriage of his first cousin John Richard Robinson of the Hazel Creek community to Miss Nellie May Hill of Caledonia (Jane's Creek Community on February 7, 1900 at the home of Miss Hill's parents, Mr. and Mrs. James Riley (Sarah Elizabeth (Ragsdale Hill-Vineyard.) The grandparents of the Robinson cousins were James Richard Robinson and Elizabeth (Betsy) McClure Robinson (Harmony Township.) John Richard and Nellie May (Hill) Robinson are the great-grandparents of the author.*

Our other, more modern day Circuit Rider was the late Rev. John Wesley Thomas (born January 10, 1897). He was known as the "Model A" Circuit Rider, because his horse was manufactured by Henry Ford. In 1932, a brush arbor was being

built near Viburnum, MO and the first nights' speaker was J. Wesley Thomas. He often said he didn't preach, he only talked; from his "talking" 28 people were converted that first night. This was the beginning of his ministerial career. Later former District Superintendent Bailey heard Rev. Thomas speak at Joseph Chapel near Antioch, MO and suggested that the young man become a full time pastor for the Methodist Church, the year was 1937; he was later formally ordained in 1944. His first churches were Belgrade and Doe Run (1937) for a salary of $500. a year. On the third Sunday of November 1937, there was a calamitous commotion in Belgrade as a Model A bearing Rev. Thomas and his wife came in to town. Rev. Thomas remained in Belgrade until the spring of 1939. He was then sent to Marvin Chapel and Libertyville before returning to the valley to pastor Belgrade and Caledonia Methodist from 1949 thru 1960. While in the valley again, he started continuous regular weekly Sunday services, the Caledonia United Methodist Men's organization, led the communities in the first Belgrade-Caledonia Annual Church sales. Upon leaving the Belgrade-Caledonia Charge in 1959, he was moved to Winfield, Moscow Mills and Asbury (northeast Missouri). He ended his career on June 1965 with 32 years of full service and 12 years of part-time service to the ministry. He and his wife, Lola, retired to the Caledonia area and even after retirement he preached two Sundays each month at the Joseph Chapel United Methodist Church. He married the former Miss Lola M. Dunlap on June 5, 1924 and had four children. A special celebration service honoring his ministry was held on the first Sunday of November 1980 at the Caledonia United Methodist Church hosted by both the Belgrade and Caledonia congregations.

Note: *Rev. J. Wesley* Thomas *officiated over 272 recorded marriages through his career; one was the author's parents Mr. & Mrs. John M Robinson, Jr. (July 2, 1960) at the Winfield Methodist parsonage.*

BELLEVUE COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE

From 1866 through 1913 the Methodist Episcopal Church gained in membership and had a new vigor in its programs as well as increases in church properties. Higher educational standards for the clergy were cultivated and theological seminaries were founded. This was most evident with the formation of the Bellevue Collegiate Institute (BCI). At the 1867 Annual Conference held in St. Louis, the

Methodist Board of Higher Education surveyed locations for the newest of their theological seminaries. The site was selected in Caledonia, Missouri. The Bellevue Collegiate Institute (BCI) had been planned a year before by a small group of prominent Caledonia businessmen. The original stock company shareholders for the construction and planning of the college were William George Eversole, James A. Carson, Dr. Munson Carr, M.D., Albert Carr, James S. Evans and John Amonett. The college was co-educational for those obtaining degrees in religious studies, history, literature, and general educational studies. Many of the young men in the religious program were lent out to local Methodist churches to fill pastoral positions until those churches could retain their own pastors. They included Bismarck, Alum Cave, and Hickory Grove.

The two "guiding lights" of BCI were the Rev. T.M. Finley, D.D. and the Hon. Willard Duncan Vandiver, Ph.D. These two men contributed greatly to the educational and financial success of the college. Professor and college president Willard D. Vandiver (college tenure 1877-1889) built the first and only college presidential home on the corner of Alexander & College Street, which still stands today. He left Caledonia in 1889 and accepted the chair of science at Cape Girardeau State Normal School (later becoming SEMO) in 1889, and became its president in 1893 until 1897. He later went on to become one of Missouri's illustrious U.S. congressmen (1897-1905) and is credited with the state's famous slogan *"I'm from Missouri, you've got to show me."* He died and was buried in Columbia, MO on May 30, 1932.

Following the withdrawal of the St. Louis Methodist conference support of the Bellevue Collegiate Institute on June 7, 1895 the college continued until it formally closed in the spring of 1902. The Methodist conference records show the deeding of the property back over to the Caledonia public school district and the buildings used as classrooms for the local high school until the last of the buildings was razed in the late 1950s. A newer red granite school had been built on part of the original college site in 1936.

Cooperation And Competition

Despite these early differences, the churches continued to cooperate with not only other denominations, but by the end of 1914 and through to 1916, talks of re-uniting with the M.E. Church, South took place. By the 1930s this proposal would

create again a unified church body. The majority of Methodist Protestants nationwide were in favor of the union.

During this period of the early 1920s and late 1930s both Belgrade churches worked harmoniously with each other and often shared pastors and had joint vacation bible schools and social events. From 1904 through 1921 several Belgrade MEC, South minsters were also assigned to the Caledonia Methodist Church.

Conference and local records for the Belgrade Methodist -North church are very sketchy with the lineage of Pastors and Presiding Elders that actually served. Conference records dating from 1883 through the close of the Belgrade MEC, South (1929) are better; the first records of Belgrade MEC are from 1928 with the Rev. Nara Turnbough (this pastor was a leader in the planning and construction of the new church). From the early 1940s through the mid-1980s Belgrade and Caledonia shared many pastors.

From records obtained from the Missouri Methodist Archives and local family narratives, I have tried to sketch together the lineage of the Pastors and Presiding Elders that served the Belgrade Charge.

Belgrade South
(1845-1939)
1845-1880
1881-1882 S.W. Emory
October-1883 B.E. Warren, Presiding Elder
1886 W.C. Enochs & Dr. Wm. Crandall, P.E.
1891-1892 W.S. Tyler (Circuit Rider)

1895-1900 Rev. Alex M. Robinson (Circuit Rider)

1900 Rev. J.R. McCaslin
1904 Rev. T.A. Huffing & Rev Dr. E. Ray, P.E.
1905 Rev. James Carroll Reid (Circuit Rider)
1909 Rev. J.C. Reid & J.W. Duncan, P.E.
(these men were also assigned to Caledonia)
1912 Rev. Luther E. Sitton
1915 Rev. C.M. Sherrow

1920 Rev. John L. Wood *(Caledonia)*

Belgrade M.E. Church
(1847-Present day UMC)
1847-1886 No records

Oct. 1886 (recorded deed to church)
1886-1928 No records
1928-1929 Rev. Nara Turnbough (Pastor during the building of the new church)
1930 Rev. Volner
1935-1937 Rev. W.E. Forsythe
1937-1939 Rev. John W. Thomas
1940 Rev. Myers
1941-1948 Rev. Earl Conner (Caledonia)
1949-1960 Rev. John Wesley Thomas
1960-1963 Rev. James P. Sweet
1963-1966 Rev. James S. Kabler
1967-1972 Rev. William Sherman (Pastor during the building of the new/present church)
1973-1979 Rev. Paul S. Powell

1921 Rev. John E. Ellis (*Caledonia*)
1923 Rev. L.D. Stickney & H.P. Crow, P.E.
1925 Rev. Frank Richardson
1926 Rev. J.D. Clark
1928 Rev. H.M. Andrews
1929 Rev. John A. Wood (***Final pastor***)

1980-1987 Rev. Robert L. Hemmerla
1987- 1989 Rev. Robert Bullock
1989- 1991 Rev. William T. White
1991-1994 Rev. John C. Stein
1994- 1998 Rev. John Lee Adams
1998 – 2009 Rev. Julius Ketsenberg
2009 - Present Rev. Brenda West

No conference records were found for the Belgrade MEC, South after 1929, it is assumed that many had already started attending the Belgrade M.E. Church (North) and the congregations formally merged as a result of the Uniting Conference of 1939.

The former Belgrade MEC, South church building sat vacant for a couple of years until a new start-up Baptist association named the First Landmark Missionary Baptist Church offered to rent the building and eventually purchased the land and building from the Board of Trustees of the Belgrade Methodist Church on April 28, 1948 for $300.. The deed was signed by Methodist Trustees John Hanson, A.W. McNabb, and James T. Garrett over to Trustees for the First Landmark Missionary Baptist Church who were Everett Tedder, Gibson C. Mallow, and William A. Walton. The church later changed its name to Temple Baptist Church and continues today in Belgrade. The actual Belgrade MEC, South building was destroyed in the tornado that hit Belgrade on May 21, 1957. Temple Baptist re-built a new church on the same site.

The final Conference Membership Roll for the Belgrade MEC, South was dated November 28, 1929 and received for conference transfer to the Belgrade M.E. Church the same year. The names were Mr.& Mrs. W. McNabb, William Maxwell, Thomas Garrett, Pierce Robinson, George Maxwell, Sarah Dent Maxwell, Onie Lucas, Chess McNabb, Hattie Crommer, Mrs. William Johnson, Miss Mary Relfe, Mrs. Josephine (Relfe) Henderson, Mrs. Mary Townsend, Miss Grace Relfe Henderson, Mrs. Daniel (Effie) Sullivan, Joseph Townsend, Charles Townsend, and Grace Davis.

Missouri United Methodist Conference records also show that during 1904 through 1916 several community churches and chapels held quarterly meetings to discuss shared pastors and joint services and Sunday schools. In the circuit and later charge were Belgrade, Caledonia, Thomas Chapel, Council Bluff Chapel, Joseph Chapel, Sunlight, and Alum Cave Chapel. The first recorded community stewards (Trustees)

meeting was held at Thomas Chapel (Jane's Creek community) on January 27, 1906; trustee members attending were C.W. Lucas, John Edison, S.E. Bond, James Vineyard, Rev. E. Ray (Pastor in Charge), Howard R. Singleton (Presiding Elder), Dr. J.A. Eaton, J.A. Maxwell, J.W. Dotson, W.H. Tennyson, and John Richard Robinson was recording secretary. They approved payment of $70. for the quarter to the pastor. Another meeting was held August 29, 1908 at Joseph Chapel (Quaker & Cub Creek community). Attending were James T. Garrett, C.W. Lucas, George Eaton, A.W. McNabb, J.T. Blount, James N. Sitton, John Richard Robinson, Franklin Sutton, G.M. Anderson, Ulysses S. Ramsey, R.R. Bean, D.S. Imboden, Stewart McSpaden, and James A. Maxwell was recording secretary. They approved the salary payment of $106. to the pastor. One of the final minutes is dated September 2, 1916 at Hazel Glen (near the Hazel Creek, MO community) in the Caledonia Charge of the Farmington District, St. Louis Conference. The Presiding Elder was Reverend Alexander M. Robinson, along with R.D. Kennedy, P.C. and G.W. Williams.

COMMUNITY CHAPELS

Thomas Chapel & Cemetery (Jane's Creek community). The deed for the land where the chapel sits was signed by Rev. John and Anna (McMurtery) Thomas to the Trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South in Washington County on August 14, 1873. The Trustees listed were William B. Thomas, James Hays, William Gibson, Thomas W. Maxwell, and M.M. McSpaden. Before the present chapel was built, there was a log church that served as church and school known as the old Yates tract. The property was later owned by William Shirley, William T. Furry, Calvin Furry, John Robinson, Sr. and John Robinson, Jr.

Rev. John Thomas, owning a lumber mill near, furnished all the materials to build the present chapel. Recorded narratives say late summer of 1873 after the property was deeded over was when the building was started. For over forty years the Trustees of the chapel were Ivan Vineyard, and John M. Robinson, Sr. Later Trustees were Daniel Theodore Robinson (Caledonia), youngest son of John, Sr. and Mrs. Doris (Vineyard) Midgett (Belgrade), youngest daughter of Ivan Vineyard.

The Annual Homecomings have been recorded since 1898 and one of the largest was held on August 31, 1952 when some 200 attended the carry-in basket dinner with

singing in the church. This was also when the last remaining grandson of Rev. John Thomas and his family attended (Mr. Frank Vineyard). It was at this homecoming that the large altar Bible from the church was presented to Hubert Nicholson (he was the great-great grandson of Rev. John Thomas).

Superintendents of the chapel Sunday school have been Frank Sutton, Richard Robinson, James Morgan, Mrs. Bessie Furry, and the Epworth League Leader was Mr. Randolph Horton (1891-1927).

Note: *The original reed pump organ purchased for the chapel in 1900 by Mrs. James Vineyard for $50 was later sold to Mrs. Linn (Ruth) Robinson-Henderson (Belgrade) in 1970 for $100., and later sold to her great-nephew and present owner John Robinson, III for $200 in 1994 (Caledonia). The first organist was Miss Mary Vineyard followed by Irene Morgan Jones, Gladys Morgan Brickey, Muriel (Furry) Akers, and Marcella Evans.*

Joseph Chapel & Cemetery (Quaker& Cub Creek community). This chapel and cemetery is located in the Harmony Township of Washington County, west of Belgrade. The cemetery is located in the church yard behind the chapel. Commonly known as the Cole Cemetery, there are 21 graves, 14 of which are Cole family relatives. One notable is the late missionary Methodist pastor Rev. Dollison (Doll) Phillip Cole. He had preached for a time at the Council Bluff Methodist Chapel. The oldest grave is Mary Julia Love (Mar.15, 1861). The chapel officially closed regular services in June 1986.

Marler Chapel & Cemetery (Palmer community). The chapel and cemetery are located in the Harmony Township, west of Belgrade off state Highway C. The cemetery was originally known as the Sitton cemetery until the early 1890s when James Marler (1847-1924) purchased the land and gifted the plot of land to the local Methodists to build a chapel. James was a young, single man at the time and along with friend James Belfield (1835-1931) hauled lumber on wagons from mills near Shirley, MO to build the Marler Chapel. With several men from the Palmer community the chapel was built in 1905. It was a thriving chapel for many years until folks started moving out of the small community for work. The chapel is still used for funerals and homecoming services. One of the pastors for the chapel was Rev. Dollison (Doll) Phillip

Cole. Bro. Cole frequented many of the smaller chapels in the area. Two of the oldest graves in the cemetery are Mary Sitton (1841) and Amanda Sitton (1848). Current Trustees are Jewel Brown, Pres., Rhonda Reed, VP, Gail Dennis, Secretary & Treasurer.

Council Bluff Chapel (Peoria & Johnson Mountain communities). The present site of this former chapel is now under several acres of water, as it is the site of the Council Bluff Dam and spillway owned by the National Forest Service. The chapel had been erected in the late 1880s and served the families in the Peoria and Johnson Mountain communities. Former member Leo Dickey (Belgrade) remembers having services only once a month as a child and one of the traveling pastors was missionary Rev Doll Cole. The chapel went inactive in late 1950s. Families of the chapel were the Dickeys, Sullivans, Wilkinsons, Neelys to name a few.

NOTE: *Mr. Leo Dickey made arrangements with the National Forest Service to preserve the bell of the chapel and it now stands in the church yard of the Belgrade United Methodist Church (Hwy C). Ms. Joan Olmsted notes that her aunt Mrs. Edith Neely joined Council Bluff church at the age of 15 years old in 1920 and transferred her membership to Belgrade Methodist after the church closed. The author's great Uncle and Aunt Daniel Walter & Nellie Matilda (Robinson) Sullivan, who were married on July 18, 1920 held their 50th wedding anniversary at this chapel in July 1970.*

Sunlight Chapel & Cemetery (Sunlight community, aka Ramsey's Grove). This chapel is located off MO state highway C and county road JJ & Sunlight Road. One of the earliest marked graves in the cemetery (William Ramsey) is dated 1838; the cemetery was there before the chapel was built. The original deed was to the Belgrade United Baptist Church from the Pleasant Theodor (P.T.) & Eliza (Tennyson) Ramsey family on December 24, 1887. P.T. was born in Washington County in 1844 to John P. & Parmeles Ann (Tennyson) Ramsey. Mrs. Ramsey was the grandniece of U.S. President John Adams. The name was changed three times in the history of the chapel. First, Belgrade United Baptist (organized October 22, 1869), and then Ramsey Grove United Baptist (1887). [*Quote from the official minutes dated December 10, 1887, " We, the members of the United Baptist Church & the citizens of the Sunlight community met and selected*

a church site for a United Baptist Church we agree to select a place by private ballot where upon it was decided to build at the grave yard known as the Ramsey Grove Cemetery also to build a frame house 30x40x12. On motion we elect Bros. R. H. Dickey, F.M. Adams, F.M. Starkey, to procure the Deed for the land] By June 1890 Bro. R. H. Dickey was elected Acting Moderator and Thomas Hart Henderson, Clerk Pro Temp. In December 1891, Bro. Horace Blair was appointed Moderator (Pastor) for the church and Francis Marion Adams was the Clerk. Elder Blair stayed through March 1892.

On the second Sunday in December 1900, the United Baptist Church, now known as Ramsey Grove United Baptist Church by motion made by J.W. Tedder was named the Beulah Land United Baptist Church. Bro. Chester was elected Moderator and J.W. Tedder, Clerk. Deacons were H.R. Dickey, B.E. Dickey, Bro. Chester and J.C. Rasnick. By 1907, the recorded minutes state the name as either Beulah Land or Sunlight Church. On the third Sunday in May 1919 the church board met and extended the right hand of fellowship to John Shipp and Thomas Dane, who were also appointed Trustees to the church. The chapel was later deeded to the Sunlight community Methodists in the late 1930s. Everyone started calling the chapel Sunlight although that was never its "real" name. The first Church Clerk was F.M. Adams, Elder & Treasurer Robert Fortune. The Moderator was Elder Nelson Adams. Another Elder and moderator was John Wood.

The present structure is a white clapboard, single-story chapel with a bell steeple built and dedicated on May 20, 1888. Meeting minutes reflect a charge meeting to discuss the building dated September 1881 through May 1882.

Long time Trustees were Mrs. Lena May (Turner) Nickelson (Belgrade), Claude Neely (Belgrade), and Mrs. Ardath (McNabb) Yount (Belgrade). *Present Trustees (2012)* are Joan (Stricklin) Olmsted, Paul White, Charles Olmsted, Bryce Nickelson, and Jay Vavak.

Many members moved their membership to the Belgrade Methodist Episcopal Church (South) or local Baptist churches in the early 1920s and final minutes reflect a decrease in membership by the early 1930s. Many families from the Sunlight community held Memorial Day dinners through the 1940s on the grounds.

NOTE: *Elder Horace Blair (1891-1892) was the father of John Blair, who had son William Henry "Willie" Blair and the great-grandfather to Mrs. Bonnie Rothlisberger (Caledonia). The author had a wonderful conversation with Mrs. Rothlisberger about her great-grandfather and his beliefs in the Golden Rule of life and how her father and grandfather always said everyone was a creature of God, not of "one" faith, but universal faith and good-will.*

Alum Cave Chapel & Cemetery (Washington County, MO). This chapel does not exist today, but had served the community around Alum Cave located on Lost Creek in Bellevue Valley about two miles east of Caledonia (off present day Highway 32 and across from McFarland Rd. 536). The area was known for mining alum (1819-1915; *View of Lead Mines*). No other records are available. There are only eight graves in the cemetery. The oldest is dated 1889 (Susan Davis) and the last January 1916 (Mr. Noah Dennis).

THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

United Methodist Women have a long history of missionary, child, and community welfare works. In 1869 Mrs. William Butler and Mrs. Edwin Parker, wives of missionaries to India, were told of the desperate spiritual and physical needs of the women in India. At that time a male doctor could not treat a woman, so these two women along with six other women from the Boston area met, wrote a constitution, and organized the Methodist Women's Foreign Missionary Society (WFMS). By November 1869, the newly formed group had raised enough funds to send Miss Isabella Thoburn, a teacher and Dr. Clara Swain, a doctor to India. By the late 1880s, Methodist ladies groups were beginning to form. The Women's Home & Missionary Society (1880) and the same group for the Methodist MEC, South ladies by 1890. In 1884, the Women's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Protestant Church was founded. For any church to be strong and remain strong it must have a devoted group of women. The women of the Belgrade United Methodist Church have been active and supportive of the church since its early days. The WFMS societies became known as the Ladies Aid Societies.

The first recorded organized ladies group was started at the Belgrade MEC, named the *Ladies Aid Society*, formally chartered on January 20, 1936. The first

President of the Society was Mrs. Ora Lou (Maxwell) Walton (Belgrade). The Ladies Aid Society changed its name in 1939 with the merging of the two churches and renamed itself the *Women's Society for Christian Service (WSCS)* and met once a month in the afternoon at the church or in members' homes. In 1954, the younger married ladies of the church branched out and created their own evening group named the *Wesleyan Service Guild.* Both groups continued independently until 1968 when notice was given that by the start of 1973 all Methodist women's groups would go under the official organizational name of *United Methodist Women.* The Belgrade unit's unanimously changed their name and merged, still maintaining afternoon and evening units.

Purpose & Statement

The organized unit of the ***United Methodist Women*** shall be a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ, to develop a creative supportive fellowship, and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.

Ladies Aid Society (1936-1939)

First President- Mrs. Ora Lou (Maxwell) Walton

1936-1939	Mrs. Ora Lou Walton

1939 – *Changed name to* **Women's Society for Christian Service**

1940-1945	Mrs. Josie Henderson
	Mrs. F.P. Blount, V.P.
1945-1946	Mrs. F. P. Blount
	Mrs. Etna Barr, Secy.
1946-1947	Mrs. A.G. Shy
	Mrs. Youngblood, V.P.
	Mrs. T.M. Blount, Secy.
	Mrs. C. Farmer, Spiritual Leader
	Mrs. Etna Barr, Secy. Of Social Activities
	Mrs. Mattie Cole, Treasurer
1948-1950	Mrs. Mattie Cole
	Mrs. Pauline Stevens, V.P.
	Mrs. Leone Ferrell, Treasurer
1951-1952	Mrs. Pauline Stevens
1953-1954	Mrs. Etta Stricklin
1955-1956	Mrs. Hazel O. Turner
1957-1960	Mrs. Pauline Stevens
	Mrs. Mary Hollinsworth VP

Wesleyan Service Guild (1954-1968)

1957	Vivian Walton
1958	Vivian Walton
1959	Vivian Walton
1960-1961	Doris Brooks
1962-1967	Carol Turner
1968	Ganelle "Polly" Jinkerson
	Ruth Henderson (VP)
	Selma Akers (Treas.)

1960-1961	Mrs. Luella Youngblood
1962-1966	Mrs. Mattie Cole
1967-1968	Mrs. Etta Stricklin

Ceased organization and merged with UMW

Mayno Wood (Sec)
1969 Lavonne Fields *(Group changed name)*

United Methodist Women

1970-1973	Doris Brooks
1974	Lavonne Fields
1975-76	Lavonne Fields
1977-1979	Patsy (Smith) Sims
1983-1985	Doris Ives
1986	Thelma Robinson
1987-88	Kathleen (Yount) Richards
1989-1990	Penny Fadler
2001	Polly Jinkerson
2011	Sue (Shipp) Jarvis
2012	Sue (Shipp) Jarvis

The Women's Guild has sponsored many activities and programs throughout the history of the church. In the early years they held doughnut sales and the annual ham & bean dinners to raise funds for the new church building, held annual apple butter making days, annual Christmas Bazaars, sponsored Vacation Bible schools and youth outings, sponsored the community wide Well Baby Clinic, held the first Child Health Conference for all pre-school children in the Belgrade-Caledonia area in 1974, hosted Mother-Daughter banquets and programs, participated in District and Conference UMW meetings, donated to the Festival of Sharing program, to Kingdom House (St. Louis), volunteered with the community annual Heart Fund drive, the American Red Cross Drive and several other missionary and community efforts. Coordinators for the Child Health Conference were Mrs. Alice Stringham (Belgrade UMC) and Mrs. Alice Reiffer (Caledonia UMC).

Current Officers & Members of the Belgrade United Methodist Women are Sue Jarvis (Leader), Joan Olmsted, Mayno Wood, Edith Nipper

In April 1939 at the Methodist General Conference meeting both sides united into The Methodist Church. Statistics from 1939 show church membership nation-wide at 7.7 million members. This union also happened in Belgrade. Members of the Belgrade M.E. Church, South had for a couple of years been attending the M.E. Church. The northern congregation had in November 1927 established a building fund and by 1928 the new Methodist Episcopal Church was built in Belgrade. The cost of the new church was $3,900.. After the new church was built and the congregation had moved in,

the Methodist Trustees sold the old building for $425. to Gib Mallow and Everett Tedder for a store. The dedication service for the new building was held in June 1928 with a basket dinner to follow on the Linn "Van" Relfe-Henderson grove.

The Linn "Van" Relfe family had been recorded on the membership rolls of the Belgrade MEC, South church since 1880 as were the families of the Bryans, Maxwells, Bargers, Whites, Lucas, Robinsons, Townsends, Sullivans, Loves, Hansons, Eatons, Ramseys, and Garretts. All of these transferred their membership over to the Belgrade M.E. Church. Many of these early families also attended the smaller chapels in their respective communities. The Whites, Ramseys, Townsends, Hendersons, Turners and Garretts were known in the Sunlight community, as the Dickeys and Sullivans were known on the Council Bluff circuit and the Akers, Furrys, Robinsons and Vineyards known in Thomas Chapel.

This new joint congregation showed much growth in membership through the 1940s and 1950s. They had active worship services as well as an active Ladies Wesleyan Society. Church records show in the spring of 1955 discussions to start a building fund began to construct a new building. The funds were started at Belgrade State Bank in 1961 with the first and only treasurer for this building fund being Mrs. Leone (Halbert) Ferrell, second wife of Mr. O.B. Ferrell of Belgrade; she was the church's treasurer for over 40 years until her death in 1970 having been appointed by the Board of Trustees in the spring of 1931. Upon her death Mrs. Doris Brooks became the church treasurer in 1971 until 1975 when the duties were given to Mrs. Marilyn Yount. Mrs. Yount had the treasurer's position for 13 years until she and her husband moved to St. Louis and the role was taken by John M. Robinson, III in 1987 through 1997. Other church treasurers have been Mrs. Mildred Causey (10 years), Karen Harbison and the current Treasurer Mrs. Gail Dennis.

In early 1965 Merlyn E. and Hazel O. (Walton) Turner, longtime members of the church, donated a tract of land across from their home in Belgrade for the future site of the new building. The plot of land was part of the original Woods Addition of Belgrade. It had been previously owned by the pioneer family of Francis Marion (F.M.) Adams (born 1842), who in 1872 opened a smoke-house and store on the lot. After his

death, the old store and lot was purchased by his granddaughter, Miss Olive M. Adams, who later sold the plot of land to Merlyn and Hazel Turner.

Groundbreaking took place on October 31, 1965. One year later on the last Sunday of October 1966 the first activity was held in the Fellowship Hall (the 50th Wedding Anniversary of George & Frances (Puckett) Craig). The main sanctuary was completed, and morning worship services were held on November 20, 1966. That evening the church hosted the annual community Union Thanksgiving service.

THE MEN'S MOVEMENT

The roots of Methodist Men's work are found at the heart of Methodism and their source is found in the life and work of the founder John Wesley. In the United States, work among men of the Methodist Church begins with the formation of various independent societies around 1875. The first national conference for Methodist Men was held in 1898; by 1907 the name was changed to Wesley Brotherhood. Young boys also had a group from 1907 through 1939 called the Knights of Methodism. By 1924, the Wesley Brotherhood was one of the most popular men's organizations among the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. In 1928, a meeting was held in Louisville for the unification of men's work for both Methodist churches. When the Uniting Conference was held in 1939, all legislature regarding the men's work was ready and the implementation of a chartering system was put in place. The name Methodist Men was adopted formally in 1942. By 1956, Methodist Men national membership had reached 10,000 members

The Methodist Men of Belgrade had a sketchy early start. Rev. Thomas attempted to start a Men's Club in Belgrade around 1951; Charge Conference records show Fred Hollinsworth was elected their first leader. His name stays on the records through 1953; 1954 charge conference records state the men's club was inactive (Belgrade). The group didn't gain momentum, so a few Belgrade men joined the newly conference-chartered Caledonia Methodist Men's group in August 1952. The Men's Club shows up again in Rev. Kabler's conference reports (dated 1964 and 1965) stating an unchartered club (Belgrade). Mr. William (Bill) Mason is listed as the leader.

In Rev. William Sherman's pastoral notes dated May 10, 1968 in his report to Charge Conference states several Belgrade men have participated in many of the fundraising efforts to raise funds to build the present church over the last few years, but no formal Men's Club has been organized or chartered through the connectional conference or district levels. Some of the early men he noted included Lawrence Barr, Joe Stricklin, Judson Farmer, George Horton, Merlyn Turner, Ray Barr, Burt Wilkinson, Linn Henderson, John Pierce, Cliff Stevens, Bill Shipp, Bill Mason, Calvin Tullock, Frank Hays, George Horton, George Craig, Joe Walton, Claude Neely, Harold Turner and Ken Jinkerson. In Rev. Sherman's conference notes dated September 23, 1970, he states there was no formal Men's Club, but many men sought opportunities to serve and grow. The men kept the physical plant (church) in excellent condition and well maintained. He mentions Harold Turner, George Horton, T.L. Henderson, and Bill Shipp.

Not until 1987 did the Belgrade Methodist Men formally organize and start a separate United Methodist Men's unit through the Cape-Farmington District. The Charter President was Harold E. Turner, Charter Secretary/Treasurer was John M. Robinson, III; other past presidents of the Belgrade United Methodist Men were Daniel T. Robinson, John "Mac" Robinson, William "Bill" Vineyard, Eugene (Gene) Thorpe, Robert (Bob) N. Turner, and John D. Smith.

John M. Robinson, III was elected District Secretary and Treasurer of the Cape-Farmington District United Methodist Men in 1988 through 1995.

United Methodist Men's Mission

Our mission is to support spiritual growth among men, helping men to mature as disciples as they encourage spiritual formation in others.

THE BELGRADE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH BUILDING (PRESENT DAY)

Groundbreaking -1965 Consecration Service - 1967

The official Consecration Service for the new church was held on Sunday, January 15, 1967 and later when the initial debt for construction was completely paid off ($70,000), the congregation held a special service of Dedication on Sunday, October 28, 1973. This service was attended by Rev. Robert E. Goodrich, Jr., Bishop, Missouri Area

and Rev. Jeff Marsh, District Superintendent and Pastor-in-Residence Rev. Paul S. Powell. When additional land was donated for the cemetery, another special consecration service was held in 1980.

The first building committee was headed by Harold E. Turner (Chairman), Merlyn E. Turner, Secretary, Kirby Turner, M.D., Harrell Wood, John H. Pierce, Joe Stricklin, George Nipper, William (Bill) Mason, Joe Walton, George Horton, Ray Barr, Burt Wilkinson, Kenneth Jinkerson, Rev. James Kabler, Pastor-in-Residence, and Cecil Hubbard, representing the Caledonia Methodist Church board. The blue prints were designed by Mr. Bruce Barnes at a cost of $600. paid on December 5, 1964 and the principle builder was Goodwin Brothers Construction Co of Festus, Missouri; first proposal/bid letter dated March 24, 1965.

The second official building committee was appointed by Charge Conference on May 20, 1984 for the planning of the additional educational classrooms and office. Those members were Roger Yount (Chairman), Carol Turner, Daniel T. Robinson, Mayno Wood (Secretary), Manfred Litchi and Wayne Hardin. The builder was Jesse Wilkinson of Belgrade at a cost of $22,755.

Special Window Project (spring of 1988)

The Belgrade United Methodist churchhas always taken pride in its beautiful windows. When the 1967 building was constructed, art glass windows of multi-color hues were installed by Hauser Studios of Winona, Minnesota. By the spring of 1988 it was decided to replace the twenty year old windows with those purchased by families in Memory or Honor of loved ones and longtime supporters of the church. The window project was spearheaded by long time member Mrs. Carol Turner and local artist Debby Bust (Potosi). Debby was selected to design and make the new stained glass windows. A special Dedication Service was held on Sunday, October 15, 1989. The afternoon service was led by former local parishioner and District Superintendent Rev. Donald Jarvis. His message was *"God Goes Window Shopping"* and the Chancel choir performed a special version of "Bless This House" under the direction of Mayno Wood and Selma Akers. The windows are now named for the following Families and Supporters of the church:

Altar Windows

X -Harold E. & Carol Turner

Sanctuary-side door

Memory of Mr. & Mrs. L.K. Stringham and Mr. & Mrs. Vernon Petersen by John and Alice (Petersen) Stringham

West Wall

X – George & Sarah Maxwell

X- In Honor of Our Parents Vineyard, Keiger, Thorpe

X - John (Mac) & Thelma Robinson AND Howard & Doris (Tedder) Brooks

The third official building committee was appointed by Charge Conference in May 1989 for the purpose of designing and constructing the official Belgrade parsonage. Committee members were Harold E. Turner (Chairman), John M. Robinson, III, (Treasurer), Mayno Wood(Secretary), Kenneth Jinkerson, Kathleen (Yount) Richards, Larry Yount, Mr. Nelson Sinclair, representing the Bismarck Church, and Pastor-in-Residence Rev. William T. White.

We do not know where the first pastors lived while in Belgrade. Around 1904 Conference records show that Belgrade had a joint pastor with Caledonia and the pastor and his family lived in the parsonage in Caledonia. Again, in 1909 and 1920, joint pastors lived in the Caledonia parsonage. By the early 1940s through the mid-1980s Belgrade was sharing pastors with Caledonia and Bismarck and these pastors and families lived in parsonages in Caledonia and Bismarck, Missouri.

In early 1989 it was decided that Belgrade should build their own parsonage and a new parsonage fund was established at Belgrade State Bank. In May 1989 funding was in place to start construction of the present parsonage. The first pastor to live in the parsonage was Rev. William T. White and his wife Virginia. The builder was Joe Weeks of Belgrade at an original cost of $120,000. The pastor moved in around August 1991.

The fourth official building committee was appointed by Charge Conference 2010 for the purpose of re-modeling and enlarging the present building. The committee chair was John D. Smith.

MUSIC MINISTRY

The music ministry is one of the most vital ministries in a local church and should be viewed as a sacred part of any worship service. The Belgrade United Methodist Church has had many talented and gifted singers and musicians throughout its existence. From the earliest days, the church has had a volunteer choir and choir leader. Starting in 1958 and for the next 32 years, Mrs. Mary I. (Mayno) Wood led the choir as they performed various Easter and Christmas cantatas, special worship and holiday programs, and sang at funerals and weddings. Adding to the beautiful voices have been church pianist Mrs. Luella (Fairchild) Youngblood and later organist -Mrs. Carolyn Hemmerla (1980-1986), and Pianist - Mrs. Selma J. (Mason) Akers, who continues to provide beautiful instrumental music for the worship service. Selma has played for many community events including several baccalaureate services at Valley R-6, weddings, funerals and currently plays as a substitute for the Caledonia Methodist Church. Joan Olmsted has also played for church services at Belgrade and Caledonia over the years.

The volunteer congregational choir became known as the Chancel Choir in 1958. Present and past members include Choir Director Mary T. (Mayno) Wood, Selma Akers, Becky (Wood) Jenkins, Carol Turner, Cathy (Turner) Heisel, Karen (Akers) Harbison, Sharon (Hollinsworth) Smith, Joan (Stricklin) Olmsted, Margaret (Turner) Bullock, Sue (Shipp) Jarvis, Doris (Tedder) Brooks, Julie (Heisel) Loughary, Ganelle "Polly" (Ferrell) Jinkerson, Kenneth Jinkerson, Joe Stricklin, Jon Turner, Patsy (Smith) Sims, Doris Ives, Judy Nipper, Diane(Wood) Jenkins, Allen Smith, Daniel T. Robinson, William (Bill) Vineyard, Eugene Thorpe, Chuck Olmsted, Vickie (Jarvis) Maxwell, Roy Barr, Gerene Barr, Leila Tullock, Calvin Tullock, Robert (Bob) Turner, John M. Robinson, III, Steve Jarvis, Erin Harbison, Cleo Thorpe, Marilyn Vineyard, and Marsha Hawbaker. The church pianists have been Mrs. Youngblood with her former student and assistant Selma Akers. On Sunday, August 11, 1974, after almost 20

years, Mrs. Youngblood retired and moved from the Belgrade community at which time Mrs. Selma Akers became and continues to be the church pianist.

Four different youth choirs have started; the first group under the direction of Joan Olmsted in the mid-1960s, which often sang at regular services and at all holiday services. Members included Jon Turner, Cathy (Turner) Heisel, Karen (Akers) Harbison, Cindy Akers, Debbie (Goforth) Yount, Sheila (Fields) Hickman, Michelle Akers, Brenda (Lulu) Walton, Tim Walton, and Tabitha Beers. The group practiced after school and rode the school bus to the church to practice. They also practiced between church and Sunday school and sometimes after Sunday school. Mrs. Beers played for the group first, but was replaced by Mrs. Selma Akers after the first few months. They sang together for several years until some went into the Chancel Choir and others moved away. Several of these singers also participated in programs presented for the annual UMW dinners during those years. This group and all the groups to follow were featured in many original musical Christmas plays at the church.

The second youth choir was The Witnesses (1975 thru 1981), Directed by Joan Olmsted and Selma Akers pianist. This group sang for holidays, the bicentennial, at the Valley Lions Club, at other churches and frequently during regular worship services. Original members were Donna (Sadler) Cooper, Chuck Olmsted, John Robinson, III, Kristie Hawbaker, David Hawbaker, Steve Jarvis, Vicki (Jarvis) Maxwell, Sandy Jenkins, and Alisa (Smith) Nickelson.

The *Messengers* was the third group formed by Donna Sadler (alto), Kristi Hawbaker (lead), Steve Jarvis (tenor) and Chuck Olmsted (bass) when they started high school in 1981. They sang gospel songs for the holidays, worship services in their own church and at other churches and meetings in Belgrade, Bismarck, Caledonia, Irondale, and Potosi until they graduated from high school. Selma Akers was the fabulous pianist and Joan Olmsted directed. The group practiced often and each had a featured solo. Their theme song was *"Standing on the Solid Rock"*. Julie Olmsted and Vickie (Jarvis) Maxwell often traveled with the group and sang a duet during the quartet concerts.

fourth was the *Girls Youth Quartet* (during 1990s). Members were Julie (Heisel) Loughary, Melissa Yount, Laurie Akers, Rebecca (Robinson) McClanahan, and Kari

Harbison with Mrs. Selma Akers as their accompanist assisted by Cathy Heisel and Joan Olmsted.

Special music was a part of the original Consecration Service in 1967. Local Potosían Lowell McFarland (Potosi High School Music Instructor) wrote a special piece just for the Belgrade Church. The special music was performed by Mrs. Selma Akers and Mrs. Mayno Wood as a duet. The choir stared wearing official choir robes purchased by Mr. M.E. Turner when they moved into the new church in 1966.

THE YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS

Epworth Junior League, Methodist Youth Fellowship (M.Y.F)

& United Methodist Youth Fellowship (U.M.Y.F) Groups

There have been three primary youth organizations at Belgrade. In the early years (ca. 1900), the group was called the Epworth Junior League. By the late 1940s, the Epworth League became known as the Methodist Youth Fellowship. It was a very active group, which had definite programs and entertainment. In 1968, the group became known as the United Methodist Youth Fellowship (UMYF). Conference records of 1906 show Adult leaders of the Belgrade Epworth League as Mollie Maxwell and Charles Gallaher.

On June 26, 1907 a four-act drama entitled "Dot the Miner's Daughter" was presented by members of the Belgrade Epworth League. The cast was Mrs. Aumon Adams, Misses Anna Breckenridge, Mollie Maxwell, Josephine Tennyson, Nellie and Sue Townsend; Messer Aumon Adams, Charles Wiley, Fred and Eugene Breckenridge, Chas. Smith, Olin Love, Jim and Ray Maxwell. The play was the best of its kind in Belgrade. Many urged the group to give it again in the future. {QUOTE from Belgrade News article, *Weekly Independent*, July 4, 1907}.

Methodist Youth Fellowship (MYF). Methodist Youth Fellowship Leaders were Mr. & Mrs. Lawrence & Etna Barr (1940s -50s) Mr. and Mrs. Harold Turner and Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Jinkerson (1960s), Margaret (Turner) Bullock (1960s), Joan Olmsted (late 1950's -1960's), Doris Brooks (1968).

Presidents (Student Fellowship- MYF): Donald Jarvis (1955-1957), Kirby Turner (1957-1958), Joe Turner (1959-1960)

In 1959 Joan Olmsted (age 18 years old) started a group called I.A.H. Club which was a branch of the David Cook Circle numbering several thousand young people for pre-MYF aged youth. The purpose of the group was to learn about living a helpful Christian life. The group met at the church, had lessons, Bible readings, singing and lots of fellowship. We each received a ring with the letters I.A.H. printed on the silver ring. Some still have their rings. I.A.H. stood for *I Am His.* Early members were Candy Fields, Joe Turner, Marilyn Yount, Susan (Yount) McClain, Eddie Nipper, Terry Walton, Margaret (Turner) Bullock, and Nancy Brooks.

NOTE*: The I.A.H. Club was a continuation of the I.A.H. Circles started by David G. Cook (b.1850) to Rev. Ezra & Pamala Cook of East Worcester, NY. Membership was 0.10 cents a year and included a membership silver ring.*

Conference Records report Junior High Youth Groups (April 30, 1961) Leaders Mr. & Mrs. Harold Turner and Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Jinkerson; Candy Fields (Pres.), Nancy Brooks (VP), Marilyn Yount(Secty), and Margaret Turner (Treas).

(April 1965): Leaders Mr. & Mrs. Chas (Joan) Olmsted; Youth Connie Nipper, Becky Wood, Sharon Turner, and Connie Austin.

(April 1968): Leaders Margaret Turner and Doris Brooks; Youth Sheila Fields (Pres.), Karen Nickelson (VP), Debbie Goforth(Treas.) and Joyce Brooks (Secty) {Pastoral Notes: Rev. William Sherman dated May 8, 1968; *The MYF has participated in sub-district and district meetings. They also represented the church at summer camp.*}

United Methodist Youth Fellowship (UMYF). Adult Leaders were: Mrs. Carol Turner (1971, 1975-78, 1984-1986); During this period youth and Young Adults mentioned were: Lloyd Akers, Jon Turner, Linda Walton, Karen Akers, Cathy Turner, Marsha Nipper, Cindy Akers, Michelle Akers, Lulu Walton, Diane Wood, Terri Nicholson, Ricky Jenkins, Robby Jenkins, Cheryl Nipper, Tim Walton, Sheila Fields and Debbie Goforth. They had a very active group and participated in many outings, plays, worship services, and community service projects.

Adult Leaders - John Robinson, III (1986-1989), Youth: Melissa Robinson, Tina Glaser, Doug Glaser, Jennifer McClain, Jack Stringham, Nicole Smith, Danny Robinson, and George Stringham.

Leaders Richard & Katie Henderson (1985-1987), Youth: Stephen Nickelson, Alisa Smith, Michelle Glaser, Bobby Robinson, Allen Smith

Leaders Daniel T. & Patty Robinson (1990-2000); the group was renamed the God Squad in the late 1990's; other Adult Helpers were Mrs. Alice Glaser & Mrs. Connie (Nipper) Waller (1990's) Youth: Rebecca Robinson, Kari Harbison, Erin Harbison, Laurie Akers

Dan & Patty Robinson hosted several hay rides and picnics at their farm for the church families, in later years Larry & Cathy Heisel have hosted similar gatherings on their farm.

Rev. Julius Ketsenberg started a United Methodist faith study group (1999) for young adults.

MEMORIAL GIFTS TO THE BELGRADE CHURCH, 1967 TO THE PRESENT

"To live in the hearts we leave behind is to never die"....Thomas Campbell

Memorial gifts are those given to remember a loved one who has passed from this earth. The gift symbolizes how special that person or persons was to us. Since the late 1960's records have been kept solely by the church treasurer as to the memorial gifts of monies that have come through on behalf of a loved one from the congregation that has passed and honorariums on behalf of a kind act that someone from the church or the church itself performed for a family in need.

This list briefly outlines the gifts that were presented during the final phase of construction of the new building (1967) and the first year of service.

Land for the Church Building – Mr. & Mrs. Merlyn (Hazel) Turner;
Landscaping – Mr. Kenneth Jinkerson;
Exterior Cross- Belgrade State Bank;
Gravel & Trash burner- Mr. Trenice Yount;
Building supplies-Rodgers & Barks Co.;
First year insurance premium – Mr. & Mrs. Harold Turner;
Outdoor bulletin board – Men's S.S. Class;
Public Address system – Mr. Frank Hayes;
Altar flags-M.Y.F.;
Piano- Mr. & Mrs. Claude Neely;

Piano Light- Mr. & Mrs. Roy Barr;
Communion ware- Miss Louella Larmer;
Collection plates- Junior S.S. Class;
Altar cross & candles – Mrs. Hazel Turner;
Choir robes – Mr. M.E. Turner;
Hymnals (various members of the congregation);
kitchen range-Bay's Store (Robert Bays-Caledonia);
Refrigerator- Men's S.S. Class;
Coffee maker- Mrs. Ruth Turner;
Candle lighters- Mr. & Mrs. Harold Yates; Mr. & Mrs. Norman Turnbough, & Mr. & Mrs. James Horton.
Large Altar Cross-Sanctuary - Mr. & Mrs. Cliff Stevens & Debbie Goforth (granddaughter) Communion Linens & Altar cloth - by the A.R. Duty Family; Mr. & Mrs. Walter Dickey, & Mr. & Mrs. Dan R. Perry (dedicated on May 30, 1968)
Living Christmas tree - by Geo. & Mildred (Mitchell) Horton Families (1988)
Organ - T.L. & Ruth (Robinson) Henderson Families (Oct. 9, 1979)
Robert Heisel Memorial Fund - Robert Heisel Family
Large Memorial Wall Plaque - Family & Friends of William (Billy) Shipp (2004)
Polly's Project - Friends of the late Ganelle "Polly" Jinkerson (2009)
Belgrade United Methodist Scholarship Fund

BELGRADE UNITED METHODIST CEMETERY

Land donated by Mr. & Mrs. Lawrence (Lucille Cole) Shipp (1979). Consecration Service held 1980. The cemetery is located in Belgrade Township, Survey 2151-T36N-R2E. Highway C (Main Street of Belgrade). The cemetery is directly behind the church.

Original Trustees of Cemetery Board: Kenneth Jinkerson (First Chairman), Mayno Wood (First Secretary & Treasurer), June Martin, Alice Stringham, Larry Yount, Howard Brooks, Bill Shipp, and Harold E. Turner

The first funeral in the new church was Mrs. Bertha Irene (Larmer) Turner on April 11, 1967. She was the wife of Charles Grant Turner of Belgrade, MO. The first burial in the church cemetery was Mr. Leon Leadford on November 26, 1980.

THE DAILY WORKINGS OF THE CHURCH – OFFICE STAFF

Almost from the time the doors opened at the new building of the Belgrade United Methodist Church, there have been several capable women who have assisted the pastors in the running of the church office. At various times when the pastorate had dual charges, they assisted with newsletters, mailings and conference reports for all churches. The first "official" secretary was Mrs. Sharon (Hollinsworth) Smith (1974-1981), followed by Mrs. Marsha Hawbaker (1981-1982), Mrs. Thelma M. Robinson (1983-1999), Mrs. Carolyn Ketsenburg (1999-2009), Debbie Pyatt (2009-2010), and

Mary Jo Midgett (2010-2011). Diane (Wood) Jenkins also assisted in the office during the 1990s,

In the late 1980s, the collective churches in the four-church charge (representing Belgrade, Caledonia, Bismarck and at times Belleview UMCs) established a collective fund to help defer the costs for newsletters and other joint mailings and office supplies. The first treasurer for these funds was Mrs. Alice P. Stringham (Belgrade), later Mrs. Connie (Nipper) Waller (Belgrade). The joint-charge-office setup ceased in early 2000.

BELGRADE METHODIST QUILTERS AND THE MISSOURI STAR QUILTERS GUILD

Prior to the formation of the Missouri Star Quilters Guild, the Belgrade United Methodist Church had an organized quilter's circle. Records in 1969 reflect members of the Methodist Quilting Circle were Leona Farrell, Etna Barr, Gerene Barr, Ora (Turner) Tullock, Pauline Stevens, Mary Hollinsworth, Leila Tullock, Carol Turner, Ruth Henderson, Annie Pierce, Mildred Wilkinson, and Luella Youngblood.

The separate church quilters circle continued for many years preparing quilts for the annual church sale and working on hand-made quilts for many in the community. Later members were Ardath Yount, Mildred Wilkinson, Polly Jinkerson, Mayno Wood, Pat Anderson, Leila Tullock, and Sue Jarvis. The church's quilters ircle formally ceased in 2010.

The Missouri Star Quilters Guild was formed in late November 1983. The first leader was Mrs. Carol Turner and the group held daytime and evening sessions. The first paid members at the December 1983 meeting were Bertha Lou Akers, Lurie Belfield, Bonnie Mills, Joyce Civey, Ida Crull, Faith Crutsinger, Wanda Davis, Carole Dickey, Lois Douglas, Debbie Harbison, Katie Henderson, Marie Highley, Jane Hrack, Jessie Jarvis, Rhonda Jarvis, Polly Jinkerson, Lula Kendrick, Lottie Kucinskis, Evelyn LaChance, Kim LaChance, Pam LaChance, Kelly Leath, Cindy McClain-Yount, Doris Midgett, Carlene Nipper, Thelma Robinson, Sheila Ruple, Stephanie Schwalbert, Marie Sutton, Carol Turner, Rubye Vavak, Mildred Wilkinson, Mayno Wood, Marie Warden, Ardath Yount, and Pat Yount. After almost 15 years of Carol Turner's leadership Mrs. Mayno Wood assumed the leaders' role until 2008 when Mrs. Bea Midgett assumed leadership of the Guild.

Founding Leader: Mrs. Carol Turner 1983-1998
Mrs. Mayno Wood 1998-2008 Ms Linda (Walton) Nickelson (Night Leader)
2011-2012 Current Leaders: Mrs. Bea Midgett (President), Ms Linda Nickelson (Night time Leader), Mrs. Mayno Wood (Secretary), and Mrs. Thelma Robinson (Treasurer)

The three remaining Charter members still in the Guild are Mrs. Carole Dickey, Mrs. Thelma Robinson, and Mrs. Mayno Wood

THE BELGRADE-CALEDONIA ANNUAL CHURCH SALE

The late Mrs. Leona Wright is credited with the idea of having a Lord's Acre plan for the Caledonia Church. The Lord's Acre plan quickly became the Belgrade-Caledonia Annual Church Sale. Originally sponsored by both churches, the first auction sale was held in August 1952. For Belgrade, the sale was sponsored by the church Board of Trustees and for Caledonia it was the Kumjoynus Club until 1966, when the leadership was assumed by the official church board of Trustees. Church records show the first auction netting $1,594.36.

On the fiftieth anniversary of the annual sale, the Belgrade Methodist Church dropped its official sponsorship. The Caledonia Church continues the traditional event and celebrated its 60th annual sale on September17, 2011.

Belgrade was honored to have for almost 30 years Mr. William "Bill" Shipp as its long time General Chairman working along with Caledonia's T.S. Douglas, Sr. and Charles F. Sutton as co-chairmen. Mr. James (Jay) Nickelson, and Jack Akers, both of Belgrade, James "Jimmy" Rieffer (Caledonia UMC), Lee Rowe (Potosi) were the Auctioneers.

Jack Akers continued to auctioneer and assist in the sale for over 52 years. Other church sale chairmen from the Belgrade Methodist Church have been Larry Yount and Gene Thorpe.

MY CHURCH MEMORIES

"I've learned that *people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." – Maya Angelou*

We all have memories of attending church, the people, the events, friendships, what we liked most, what stood out as a child and adult, individuals that meant a lot and

helped us on our spiritual journey . . . . Here are a few remembrances that members and former members have shared.

I started attending the Belgrade Methodist Church when I was six years old (1933). My mother took me. We lived at the foot of Caffe Hill and since we didn't have a car, we walked every Sunday. I was saved at 12 years old during a Revival led by Rev. Hobbs and joined the Belgrade Church in 1941; Bro. Conner was the pastor then. My husband and I raised all five of our children in the church and they are all saved and baptized, so that's what's important to me. Most of my family is back with me at Belgrade Methodist, except my son Hurshel, and we lost him to cancer in 2010, so he's already gone home to be with the Lord. All through the years the people of the church have made a great impression on my life. As a youth, I remember the people giving testimony in service; they were always shouting and praising God. My favorite child memory was receiving a "star" for knowing my Sunday school lessons. The person(s) that stand out to me were my mother (Pearl (Martin) Tedder), Mrs. Mattie Cole and my first Sunday school teacher Miss Annie Breckenridge.

Mrs. George (Edith) (Tedder) Nipper, member since 1941

I joined the Belgrade Methodist Church in 1949, the following year my parents (Joseph and Etta Stricklin) joined. I remember the Wednesday night prayer meetings with John Shipp and Jud Farmer. I started a pre- aged MYF group called the I.A.H. Club back in 1959 and directed several youth choirs.

Joan (Stricklin) Olmsted, member since 1949

I joined the Belgrade Methodist Church in 1957. My husband and I had just moved to Belgrade from St. Louis to own and operate the local grocery store. I can't remember a time when I wasn't singing. I led the church choir for 32 years before retiring those duties in 1990. It was a privilege and a joy; the choir was a very faithful group who met weekly for practice. We would often go to other churches to sing.

Mrs. Harrel (Mayno) (Talmage) Wood, member since 1957

From my earliest memories, my family has had some connection with the Belgrade Methodist Church. Grandma Josie (Henderson) and Aunt Mary (Relfe) spoke

often of the old union services, how our family hosted the basket dinner on the opening of the new church in 1928, and the apple butter workdays. My maternal grandparents (Richard & Nellie Mae Robinson) also attended, when not going to Thomas Chapel. When my parents retired back to Belgrade, they re-joined the church, which my father had attended as a youth, and were very active for many years. When my husband and I retired in the 1980's and moved to Belgrade, we too, joined the church and I was active in the UMW (being Treasurer for 10 years) and working the wonderful Xmas bazaars and my husband Bob was active in the UMMen, the choir and Sunday school. My daughter was married in the church and her two children were christened as infants in the church. I have fond memories. To honor my parents, my siblings and I donated the organ to the church after my father's passing in 1979.

Mrs. Robert "Bob" (Nellie Jo) (Henderson) Turner, former member, 1985

When I think of the Belgrade Methodist Church I think of my mother (Mrs. Mattie Cole). She loved her church and church family and was so active. She especially enjoyed the work of the Women's Society of Christian Service and the Ladies Guild as she had been its leader for several years in the 1950's and 1960's. I also think of my husband Lawrence's brother and his family, Bill and Golda Shipp and their children Billy, Sue, Bobbie, and Jack Shipp and their sister Eunice (Shipp) Duty. They were all very active in many church activities.

Mrs. Lawrence (Lucille Cole) Shipp, member Potosi Presbyterian Church

My name is Murphy Thomas, son of Rev. John Wesley Thomas. I have several very fond memories of the Belgrade Methodist Church. I was 5 years old when my Dad entered his ministry.

In 1937 we lived in Doe Run, MO and we would drive to Belgrade in a model A Ford. The blacktop road ended about one mile outside of Bismarck, so the remaining trip was on gravel. I would think our average speed would have been about 30 or 35 mph. This made for a very bumpy, dusty, long trip. In the winter time when we arrived at the Belgrade Church, Merlyn Turner would have a fire already going in the wood stove which was located near the back of the church. On one very cold Sunday, I

remember that we stood near the stove for a few minutes, while the room was warming up.

My Dad spoke fondly in his later years about the Belgrade Church and the dedication of its members, how faithful they were to serve their Savior Jesus Christ. I still remember many of the family names of the church of the people that served during my dad's time there.

To my knowledge the Belgrade Methodist Church is still serving the area in many great ways.

Mr. Murphy Thomas
(son of former Pastor John Wesley Thomas, Belgrade Pastor, 1937-39, 1949-1960)

My sister Frances (Barr) Horton and I have fond memories of the Belgrade Methodist Church. Our parents Lawrence & Mary Etna (Hogan) Barr were highly respected and set an example for many members of our family and community on serving the local church. They sang in the choir, taught Sunday school, and sponsored the MYF, just to name a few things. My sister and I were each married in the former church building and my children were christened in the church under Rev. Wesley Thomas (1956 & 1959). My mother was a faithful member for over 55 years. She was very involved in the ladies organizations. I was baptized at Big River along with six other new members of the Belgrade Methodist Church. One was Fred Hollinsworth (father of Sharon Smith). Fran and I often think of Belgrade and the wonderful families.

Mrs. Freda (Barr) Turnbough, former member, 1940's

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FROM THE ARCHIVES . . .

DISCOVERY: WHALE-TOOTH GAVEL

Each year the Commission on Archives and History of the Missouri Conference holds at least one of its quarterly meetings at Central Methodist University. At one of these occasions, Central Methodist University President, Marianne Inman, stopped by to greet the commission. She mentioned that at one time she had seen a rather unusual gavel in one of the boxes in the Methodist Archives, housed in Smiley Memorial Library on the CMU campus. This gavel had an unusual shape and was inscribed, "Alaska Methodist College." She asked us to see if we could find this gavel again, so I began investigating the background of the gavel to see if there were any clues as to where it might have been filed away in the archives.

Dr. Inman recalled conversations she had with Rev. P. Gordon Gould, who led the effort to establish a Methodist college in Alaska. He said that one of these gavels was presented to each bishop during General Conference of the Methodist Church in 1956. So I looked up the proceedings of that conference and discovered the following:

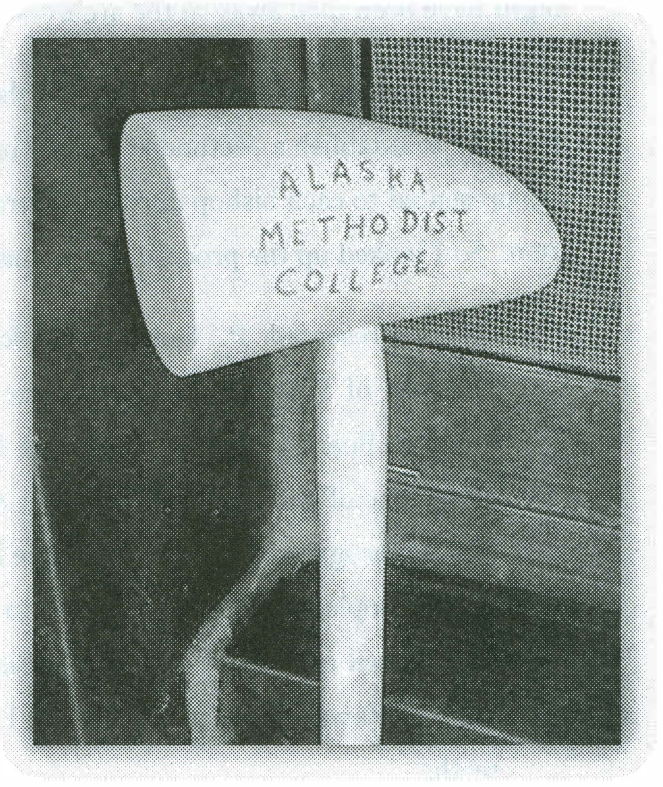
> Presented P. Gordon Gould (Genesee-NE), Superintendent and Director of Work in Alaska, for the Division of National Missions of the General Board of Missions of The Methodist Church, who made a brief statement of the conception of the Anchorage Alaska Methodist College, and the progress that has been made in its realization, to date, and in behalf of the people of Alaska, presented to Bishop W. Earl Ledden, President of the Council of Bishops, and to the Bishops of The Methodist Church in the United States gavels, made by the Eskimos of Nome, Alaska, from whale teeth.[i]

It is unknown if the presentation of these gavels to the bishops was the deciding factor, but a resolution to support the establishment of an Alaskan Methodist College was passed on April 28, 1956. Larry Hayden, Chair of the Archives and History Commission of the Alaska Annual Conference, provides much more detail in his history of the institution now known as the Alaska Pacific University. He includes a picture

that appeared in a Minneapolis newspaper showing a group of bishops holding up their gavels.[ii] He states that the creation of these gavels was made possible by a $500 gift of Arthur Waldron. Eskimo artists in Nome carved some 52+ from whale teeth.

Since these gavels were presented to each of the Methodist bishops, it stands to reason that the gavel in the holdings of our archives must have been presented to the bishop serving the Missouri area of the Methodist Church at that time. But that bishop was Ivan Lee Holt and we do not have any of his papers here. However, since Bishop Holt retired in 1956, it is reasonable to assume that he might have passed the gavel along to his successor, Eugene M. Frank. We do have several boxes of Bishop Frank's personal papers, and sure enough, this very unique gavel was discovered in the company of a number of other gavels the bishop had accumulated.

An informal survey reveals that there are only a handful of these gavels that are still held by Methodist institutions. Not even the Alaska Conference owns one! Therefore, the Archives and History Commission of the Missouri Conference decided to help remedy this situation. At its last meeting on October 2, 2012, the Commission voted to "repatriate" its Alaska Methodist College gavel to the Archives and History Commission of the Alaska United Methodist Conference. This unique artifact will soon be returning home to Anchorage.



[i] Journal of the 1956 General Conference of the Methodist Church, Edited by Lud H. Estes (Nashville: The Methodist Publishing House, 1956), 229-30.
[ii] Larry Hayden, *A History of the Alaska Methodist University, 1948-1977, Alaska Pacific University, 1978-2008* (Anchorage: Commission on Archives and History, Alaska Conference, 2008), 15.